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Twice As Likely To...

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Abstract

TRIGGER WARNING!

I am white. I am bisexual. I am female. I have been sexually assaulted. Three times. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, sexuality, gender, bisexual, sexual assault, ALLIES

Disciplines

Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies | Gender and Sexuality | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies | Women's Studies

Comments

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](#) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surgegettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that -isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

TWICE AS LIKELY TO...

November 13, 2013

TRIGGER WARNING!

I am white. I am bisexual. I am female. I have been sexually assaulted. Three times.

Once during my freshman year at Gettysburg College. I'd met him a few hours before. Once my sophomore year, in Akron, Ohio by a "friend" of six years. And once while I was abroad in Australia by someone I'd known for two days. He thought it was okay to come into my room while I was sleeping. Every time I felt disgusting, confused and angry.

All of my perpetrators were heterosexual men.

Until last week, I'd never really considered why these things happened to me besides the fact that alcohol was involved. But at a recent meeting with ALLies and SASA, we discussed the [prevalence of sexual assault within the queer community](#) and the statistics were alarming.

[13.1% of lesbians, 17.4% of heterosexual women, and 46.1% of bisexual women](#) experience sexual violence in their lifetime.

That is nearly half of all bisexual women.

As I searched for an explanation for this fact, I found little. In a heteronormative society, this isn't surprising. But, just because the research is minimal does not mean the reasons don't exist.

Typical stereotypes about bisexual women are that they are promiscuous, hyper-sexualized, greedy, and confused. There have been times in which people reacted to my coming out with raised eyebrows, a comment about wanting a threesome or asking me a question about my sex life. There was a time when I kissed a girl at a party, only to pull away and see that a group of men was watching us with overly-curious expressions, causing me to leave immediately. Maybe heterosexual men who sexually assault bisexual women are trying to prove themselves or show that she wants them more than she wants another woman. Maybe they believe the demeaning stereotype that bisexual women will "fuck anything that moves". Maybe they think a bisexual woman



will be less likely to report it because of fears of being “outed,” concerns about retaliation, worries about being taken seriously or limited comfort with her own sexuality.

These are all speculations though.

It's scary to know that I am at that higher risk, and my experiences do mirror the high statistic. I've thought a lot about what happened to me and whether I was coming off as “too sexy” or that I was “asking for it”. The thing is though, regardless of what others thought of my outfit or my actions, I should be free to go to a party and express myself without danger.

I still remember the prevention talk we all received during first-year orientation. We were a bunch of girls sitting in a room listening to the dangers that awaited us – dangers that seemed to be lurking in the corners of fraternities. We were told that one in three women would be sexually assaulted during our four years in college, and I thought, “Not true. That's way too many.”

It took me months to accept that what happened to me in February of my first year at college was a sexual assault. I've worked through many of my emotions and have had an amazing support network. But, I'm still angry when I realize the limits of heterosexually-focused sexual assault education.

Part of me wishes I'd known that I was twice as likely to be sexually assaulted. Maybe I would have had fewer assumptions about my safety. At least I could have been asking these why questions as a first year instead of halfway through my senior year. I'll never know how this lack of understanding impacted my college years. But, I do know that we can prevent more assaults if students of all genders and sexualities are represented and included in the discussions.

In the end though, I will not be defined by my sexuality and I will not be defined by the assaults.

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<http://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com/2013/11/13/twice-as-likely-to/>